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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 003772

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/07/2014

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SUBJECT: GYMnich RESULTS ON BURMA, SUDAN, MIDDLE EAST AND
BALKANS HOLD NO SURPRISES

REF: BRUSSELS 3749

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SUMMARY

1. (SBU) The EU Foreign Ministers' informal "Gymnich" meeting in Maastricht on September 3-4 proceeded as expected (reftel). The EU will go ahead with the Asia-EU (ASEM) Summit in Hanoi on October 7-9, as long as Burma attends at the FM or lower level, but the FMs also announced further sanctions they would impose unless Burma's human rights record improves by then. To underline their concerns about the situation in Darfur, EU FMs asked the Council Secretariat to prepare a draft list of sanctions the EU could consider imposing on the Sudanese Government in the future. The EU declared it would be prepared to respond positively if the African Union requests an EU Police Mission for Sudan. On Iraq, the general EU mood was positive on member states responding to requests for financial support of a UN multinational force, although no Community funds can be spent on the force. The EU also underlined the need for the next Quartet meeting in New York to propose "concrete steps" forward. There was no agreement that the EU should support IAEA referral of Iran to the UNSC in September, but the EU still hoped to send a "clear signal" to Teheran. Regarding the Balkans, the Commission got approval to talk separately to the Serbian and Montenegrin governments about negotiating a Stabilization and Association Agreement, although the EU insisted the two republics should remain one country. The EU consensus on developments in Kosovo tracked very closely with the recent report of UN envoy Kai Eide. End Summary.

ASEM/BURMA: TIGHTENING SANCTIONS, WHILE AGREEING TO TALK

2. (U) EU FMs agreed on a non-paper outlining the EU's strategy, which should now be formally endorsed at the September 13 GAERC meeting in Brussels (copy faxed to EUR/ERA). In short, EU is going ahead with the ASEM meeting (it would be an "affront to the Asians" to cancel it, Bot told the Dutch press). The EU's "expectation" is that, if the Burmese don't meet the EU's three demands (release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest, an end to harassment of the National League for Democracy, and a "genuine open debate in the National Convention) by then, the Burmese participant should be "lower than at the level of Head of State/Government" and the summit will be "an opportunity to confront Burma" on human rights concerns. EU would also adopt a revised Common Position on Burma that would "tighten existing measures" by: an expansion of its visa ban to all officers at Brigadier General and above and their families; prohibiting EU companies from "making any finance available to named state-owned enterprises; EU Members States voting against IFI loans to Burma; and consideration of proposals to address illegal logging. The EU would also increase its aid to health and education, in consultation with the NLD.

SUDAN/DARFUR: KEEPING THE SANCTIONS OPTION OPEN

3. (U) FM Bot said the EU remains concerned about the situation. It will continue its humanitarian support, and stands ready to provide necessary support to the African Union. Specifically, the EU would consider launching an EU Police Mission on an initiative from the AU. (Bot, External Relations Commissioner Patten and High Rep Solana were all keen to underline the need for the AU, not the EU, to have "ownership" of the Sudan problem.) The EU Council also "does not exclude the possibility" that it will in the future need to impose sanctions on the GoS, and has tasked the Council Secretariat with drafting a list of possible sanctions the EU

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could impose, including a discussion of their implications. Asked about an oil embargo, Bot said FMs did not discuss what specific sanctions should be on the list, but expressed skepticism an EU oil embargo would be effective.

IRAQ: NO EU MONEY FOR UN FORCE, BUT MAY BE FROM MEMBER STATES

4. (SBU) Bot said he "launched an appeal to colleagues" to

make further contributions to fund the "1800 troops" in a "protection force for the UN". He said he hoped the UN force could be established soon, and that EU members could fund it.

Council contacts said that no EU Member States made any firm commitments in the Gymnich discussions, but the attitude was positive that the money could be found. Bot said "we'll see what happens in the coming days." The EU is also moving ahead on other measures to contribute to Iraq. The Dutch Presidency was given a mandate by the EUFMs to elaborate in the coming weeks on recommendations for EU actions from the recent exploratory mission to Baghdad and earlier Patten/Solana proposals. The EU's focus is on police training (training the trainers, Solana clarified, since he said security makes it "practically impossible" to do more on-the-ground training), technical assistance to other administrative forces such as border or customs forces, and support for upcoming elections.

MEPP

15. (SBU) The EU said the Israeli government's decision to expand settlements "ignores the road map" and "cannot be accepted." FM Bot also insisted the EU could play a "middle man role" in making the Gaza withdrawal a "two-sided process." Bot argued the GoI was becoming more inclined to see a positive EU role in helping to reduce risk of "chaos" in Gaza after a withdrawal. Both Solana and Bot said they looked forward to a Quartet meeting during UNGA week in New York, provided it can agree on "concrete steps" forward. (Bot: "meeting just for the sake of meeting doesn't make any sense." Solana: "If we can't give the meeting content, it may not be necessary to have it at this point.") (COMMENT: These latter comments were aimed at the U.S., according to Council and Commisison sources, although the press seems to have missed them entirely. While the EU thinks Quartet agreement on how to address the Gaza withdrawal is possible, the EU is concerned that US-EU "divergences" over issues such as the settlements and the fence could make it hard to agree on a Quartet statement worth making. Our sources said by the end of the Gymnich session that it looked like planning for the Quartet meeting was progressing, and were more upbeat on the value of the upcoming meeting. Nonetheless, there remain lingering concerns in the EU that the U.S. uses the Quartet process to -- as one Council contact told us today -- "keep the Europeans quiet and prevent us from stirring up trouble." END COMMENT.)

IRAN: A "CLEAR SIGNAL" TO TEHERAN, BUT NOT TO THE UNSC YET

16. (U) Bot, Patten, Solana, Fischer all repeatedly talked about the need for the EU to "send a strong signal" to Iran on nuke concerns, and that Teheran should "make no mistake about our message." But they had nothing concrete to add and did not mention the IAEA BoG meeting in front of the press. Council and Dutch Presidency contacts tell us there is little or no EU sentiment in favor of sending it to the UNSC in September; "maybe in November, depending on that report."

BALKANS: SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO, AND KOSOVO

17. (U) The EU (especially Solana) endorsed the EU's policy supporting the State Union. Solana stressed that SaM's progress toward the EU "will be much, much faster in the context of the State Union." But FMs also endorsed Patten's proposed "twin-track" approach to handling "technical" issues "of an economic and commercial nature", such as negotiating the economic sections of a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). Patten said the aim would be to have one SAA for SaM, but with some sections where Serbia and Montenegro might be treated separately. As the AP accurately summarized it: "The EU agrees to treat the two states separately, while insisting they should remain one country." Solana argued emphatically that EU policy toward SaM "has not changed, and will not change", arguing this shift is just a technical adaptation of the EU's dealing with the governments in question. Senior EU officials (Lehne and Priebe) will go to both Belgrade and Podgorica next week to explain the change, followed by Solana and Patten in a joint trip by the end of the month.

18. (SBU) On Kosovo, the Gymnich discussion strongly supported all of the messages of the recent report by UN envoy Kai Eide. The EU urged Kosovar Serbs to participate in elections. It agreed UNMIK should look at transferring more powers to PISG, as long as the UNMIK SRSG's "control functions" are also strengthened (a Solana staffer said Solana favors a "Bosnia model" where the local authorities would make the decisions, but could be overruled by the High Rep). The UN standards process needs to be prioritized (with protection of minorities and refugee returns right at the top); and Serb concerns need to

be addressed, with decentralization "absolutely fundamental" to the whole process. Only Austrian FM (and incoming External Relations Commissioner) Ferrero-Waldner made any comment on the status issue, and that was to say it should only be discussed later.

19. (C) Dutch and Council Secretariat sources confirmed that EU FMs had no serious discussion of the status question. But there was a general consensus in favor of Eide's arguments that further postponement of the status issue would be a problem, and that it was important there be a positive standards review in 2005. Solana noted to the Gymnich that the Contact Group would have to play a leading role in the process leading to status discussions, and there were no objections. At the same time, there was little support for "early" (i.e., in 2004) appointment of an envoy to initiate discussions on status. In a discussion on Sept. 7, a Solana staffer elaborated further, noting that as long as the EU does not discuss the status issue, then Member State positions will be "all over the map." But the status issue is far too sensitive an issue to discuss at 25, since it would surely leak. That is why Solana has been pushing Member States to accept that the Quint needs to take the lead.

10. (U) Minimize considered.

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